

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 5811

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: VAPINTKU PGOV, PORS, ELAB, PINS, ES
SUBJECT: SHOOTING DEATH OF EDUARDO ORELLANA ON DECEMBER 5, 1976

1. SUMMARY - A CAMPESINO PROTEST MARCH ON THE ORELLANA FARM (LA COLIMA) ENDED ON SUNDAY DECEMBER 5 IN THE DEATH OF EDUARDO ORELLANA, A POWERFUL AND RESPECTED SALVADORAN LANDOWNER. THE ORELLANAS AND THE BUSTAMANTES REPRESENTED THE TWO MAJOR LANDHOLDERS WHOSE LAND WAS PURCHASED BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR ITS CERRON GRAND HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT. CAMPESINOS DISPLACED BY THE FLOODING HAVE BEEN OFFERED NEW LAND, BUT AGITATION FOR RESITUATION CONTINUES, WITH THE RANKS OF THE PROTESTORS SWELLED BY OUTSIDE AGITATORS. RUMOR HAS IT THAT "RADICAL PRIESTS" WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN ENCOURAGING THE AGITATION. THE GOES IS SEARCHING FOR THE MAN WHOM THEY BELIEVE TO BE THE ASSASSIN, BUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF WHAT REALLY OCCURRED, AND WHY, ARE YAT TO BEDETERMINED. THIS RECENT KILLING HAS ALARMED THE VOCAL LANDHOLDING SEGMENT, AND FUTURE REPRESSIVE MEASURES AGAINST DISSIDENT CAMPESINOS MAY BE THE MAIN, AND RETROGRADE, RESULT.
END SUMMARY.
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2. ON HALF OF THE ORELLANA LAND (HACIENDA LA COLIMA) WAS EXPROPRIATED BY THE GOES FOR ITS NEW CERROCIJGRANDE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT, AGAINST THE FAMILY'S WISHES. THE ORELLANAS CLAIM THAT ALL THEIR FIELD WORKERS SO FAR DISPLACED BY FLOODING HAVE BEEN OFFEREDICOMPENSATION BY THE RIO LEMPA HYDROELECTRIC

COMMISSION (CEL. THE ORELLANA CAMPESINO SITUATION IS SOMEWHAT UNIQUE, HOWEVER, AS CEL HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR PAYING THE ORELLANAS DIRECTLY FOR THEIR LAND, AND ONLY FOR OFFERING THEIR FORMER WORKERS RELOCATION TO NEW LANDS. MANY OF THESE FORMER WORKERS, THOUGH, ARE GAINING LESS THAN THEY LOST, AND IN THEIR DISSATISFACTION HAVE BEEN PRESSURING THE ORELLANAS TO MAKE ROOM FOR THEM ON THE FAMILY'S REMAINING LAND. LED BY GROWING NUMBERS OF OUTSIDE ADVISORS AND AGITATORS, THE WORKERS HAVE BEEN DEMANDING PAYMENT FOR THEIR FORMER HOMES AND LANDS, RELOCATION TO NEW LANDS (PREFERABLY ON ORELLANA PROPERTY), WATER, ELECTRICITY, AND OTHER SERVICES.

3. CONSIDERED TO BE FAIR EMPLOYERS BY LOCAL STANDARDS, EDUARDO,

AND ONE OF HIS BROTHERS (ARANCISCO) WENT OUT OF THEIR HOUSE TO MEET THE PROTESTORS. SOMEONE IN THE CROWD DISCHARGED A PISTOL HITTING EDUARDO. RUMORS AROUND REGARDING THE IDENTITY OF THE ASSASSIN, BUT THE AUTHORITIES ARE SEEKING ONISQUUKVL FRAO SJS

A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ABOUT HIM WHICH RAN THE WRONG PHOTOGRAPH HAD NOT AIDED HIS PREHENSIVE ONE. A MEANS SOURCE SAID THAT THE SHOOTING WAS AN ACCIDENT, MANUEL FLORES MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN THE CULPRIT, BUT THAT HE IS NOW HIDDEN BY HIS FELLOW CAMPESINOS.

4. AJDED TO THE LEGITIMATE FORMER ORELLANA WORKERS WHO MARCHED ON THE FINCA ON DECEMBER 5TH WERE A NUMBER OF AGITATORS, AMONG THEM FECCAS AND UTC ORGANIZED CAMPESINO CONFIDENTIAL

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REPRESENTATIVES. THE UTC, UNIO DE TRABAJADORES DEL CAMPO, FORMED IN 1975, HAS JOINED FORCES IN RECENT MONTHS WITH THE FORMERLY CHRISTIAN-ORIENTED FEDERACION CRISTIANA DE CAMPESINOS SALVADORENOS, FECCAS, TO AGITATE FOR "A SOCIALIST WORKERS SOCIETY". MID-OCTOBER HARVEST WORKERS' WAGE INCREASES FAILED TO SATISFY THESE TWO ORGANIZATIONS, WHO HELD SEVERAL DEMONSTRATIONS AND LEGALLY PETITIONED THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR A FURTHER INCREASE IN HARVESTERS' PAY. THEIR PETITION WAS TURNED DOWN IN MID NOVEMBER. THEN IN THE TOWN OF QUEZALTEPEQUE, THE TWO GROUPS WERE INVOLVED, ALONG WITH SOME PRIESTS, IN AN ATTACK ON THE MAYOR'S OFFICE. THEY BROKE INTO THE JAIL AND FREED THE PRISONERS, AMONG WHOM WERE TWO OF THEIR OWN MEMBERS WHO HAD BEEN JAILED FOR PAINTING ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROPAGANDA IN THE STREETS. THE FECCAS-UTC COMBINATION HAS BEEN ACTIVELY SEEKING A GREATER FOLLOWING SINCE THE FAILURE OF THE GOES' FIRST AGRARIAN REFORM PROJECT, AND DID SUCCEED, UP UNTIL THE RECENT SHOOTING, IN ATTRACTING MORE MEMBERS TO THEIR FOLD. WHEN THE DISPLACED CAMPESINOS FROM THE FORMER ORELLANA LANDS

ORGANIZED TO MARCH ON LA COLIMA, FECCAS AND UTC LEADERS WERE QUICK TO JOIN IN WITH THEM. THE RUMORS OF "RADICAL PRIESTS" BEHIND THE SCENES ARE CLAIMED BY BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ORELLANAS, BUT NO PROOF OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT HAS BEEN FORTHCOMING.

5. COMMENT - DESPITE THEIR CALLS FOR ORELLANA BLOOD, THE PROTESTOS UNDOUBTEDLY NEVER INTENDED THE DEATH OF DON EDUARDO. IN JOINING FORCES WITH OUTSIDE ADVISORS AND AGITATORS THEIR "CAUSE" HAS SUFFERED A MAJOR SETBACK, AS HAS THAT OF THE TWO ORGANIZED CAMPESINO GROUPS THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE FATAL PROTEST. THE GOVERNMENT'S SECURITY FORCES HAVE STEPPED UP THEIR SEARCH FOR AGITATORS AMONG CAMPESINO ELEMENTS AND AMONG YOUNG CATHOLIC PRIESTS, AND LANDOWNERS' FEARS AND DEMANDS FOR JUSTICE AND PROTECTION PROMISE LITTLE SURCEASE IN MONTHS TO COME. ACTUALLY THE TWO OR THREE RADICAL PROTESTS ARE WELL KNOWN TO SECURITY FORCES AND GENERALLY UNDER SURVEILLANCE
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AND THEIR SERMONS TAPED. DEPENDING ON HOW QUICKLY THIS ORELLANA INCIDENT IS RESOLVED AND EXPLAINED, IT MAY WELL BLOSSOM INTO FUTURE INCIDENTS AND RESULTANT OPPRESSIVE MEASURES BY THE GOVERNMENT. IF THAT COMES TO PASS, IT WILL ONLY SERVE TO FURTHER DELINEATE THE ALREADY SHARPLY DEFINED MARKERS BETWEEN THIS COUNTRY'S "HAVE'S" AND "HAVE-NOT'S".
LOWANO

NOTE BY OC/T: TEXT AS RECEIVED SAN SALVADOR 5811 CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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